

UNIT 2 The wider context

In Topic 1.3 Gender and education you looked at ways in which your school could be a force for change. But in thinking about this you have perhaps realised that many factors are beyond the scope of individual schools. These factors can help or hinder the action schools can take.

This unit looks at

- Regional, national and global factors
- Factors relating to education in the national context and the role of the state

This will help you to identify these wider factors and relate them to your own context and respond to them.

Topic 2.1 The big picture

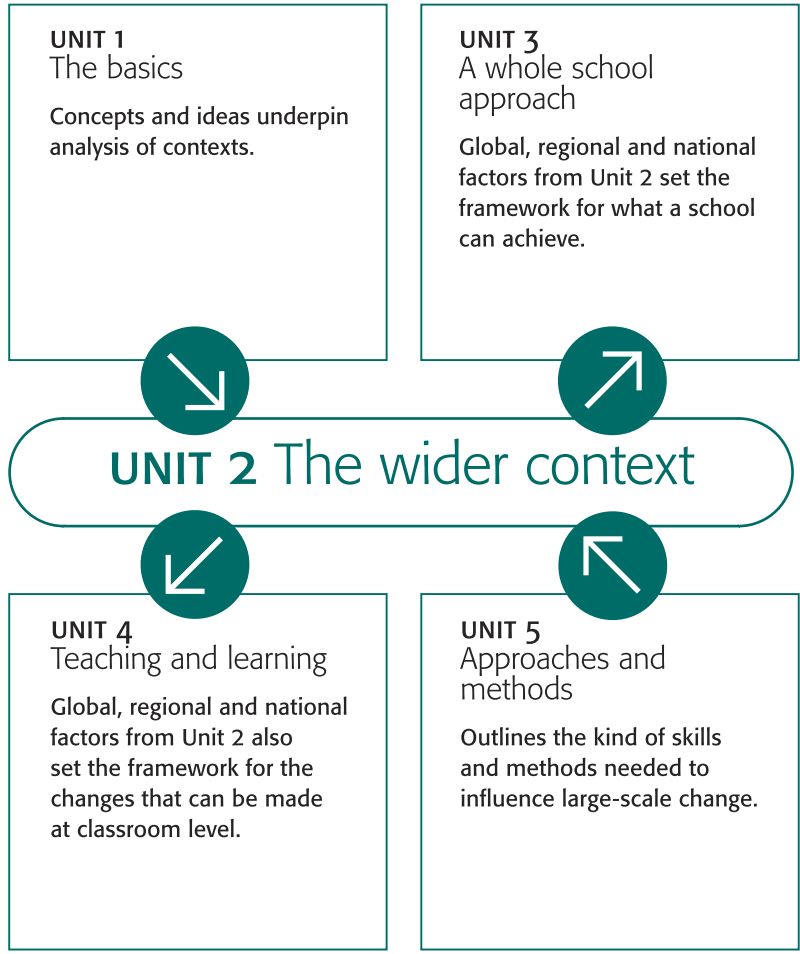
Setting your school in a wider framework can highlight the limits on the action a school can take but can also help you identify openings and opportunities for realistic changes. This topic will help you to:

- Set gender in schools in the context of global education
- Identify the complex interplay of factors that affect gender equality in education

Topic 2.2 The national education context

This topic focuses in from the big picture to examine how the action that schools can take is affected by the national education scene. It will help you to:

- Identify education factors at national level that can help or hinder the action schools take
- Think about ways of influencing these factors



Topic 2.1 The big picture

Setting your school in a wider framework can highlight the limits on the action a school can take but can also help you identify openings and opportunities for realistic changes.

This topic will help you to:

- Set gender in schools in the context of global education
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To start on a positive note there are strong global messages about gender equality and the importance of education for women. The 1990s were an important turning point with the targets of Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which in turn built on earlier declarations on human rights and gender equality.

- 1990 Education for All (EFA) conference, Jomtien, Thailand framed agendas for change in education
- 2000 World Education (WEF) conference, Dakar, Senegal reviewed progress and refined commitments

You may already know about the goals, but it is worth taking another look at them and thinking how they reflect the basic concepts covered in Unit 1.

Education for All Goals (EFA)

- (i) expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children;
- (ii) ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality;
- (iii) ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes;
- (iv) achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;
- (v) eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic

education of good quality;

(vi) improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

GOAL 2 **Achieve universal primary education**

- Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

GOAL 3 **Promote gender equality and empower women**

- Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015.

Perhaps you have noticed that the two sets of goals have a slightly different emphasis. The EFA goals go further and are more detailed; they stress equality and quality as well as parity. Taken together the two sets of goals present a strong message for progress towards gender equality in education.

The next activity asks you to think about the goals in relation to your country.

ACTIVITY Meeting global targets

What progress has been made in your country towards achieving these goals?

EFA goals

MDG goals

Which have not yet been reached?

EFA goals

MDG goals

If you could add one more goal, what would it be?

You may have a general answer to the questions from what you already know, or you may want to do some research. Note that some of the terms used in the goals are rather relative or vague, for example 'appropriate' or 'equitable'. A gender analysis of a country's education system can produce a great deal of useful data.

For information and comparison, here are statistics from two countries.

		Mozambique	Seychelles
Youth (15-24 years) literacy rate, 2000-2006*	male	60	99
	female	37	99
Number per 100 population 2005: phones		8	97
Number per 100 population 2005: Internet users		1	26
Primary school enrolment ratio 2000-2006*, gross	male	111	115
	female	94	116
Primary school enrolment ratio 2000-2006*, net	male	81	99
	female	74	100
Primary school attendance ratio (2000-2006*) ratio, net	male	63	-
	female	57	-
% of primary school entrants reaching grade 5 (2000-2006*), admin. data		62	99
% of primary school entrants reaching grade 5 (2000-2006*), survey data		84	-
Secondary school enrolment ratio (2000-2006*), gross	male	16	106
	female	11	105
Secondary school enrolment ratio (2000-2006*), net	male	8	94
	female	6	100
Secondary school attendance ratio (2000-2006*), net	male	8	-
	female	7	-

*Data refer to the most recent year available during the period specified in the column heading.

These are just two examples. You can find such data at <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/index.html> where this information about Mozambique and Seychelles comes from.

As you have seen, the EFA and MDG goals give powerful messages. Yet there are still wide gender gaps in education. Many factors, such as economic imbalances and power structures, prevent the goals being reached. So gender inequality in society cannot be tackled by education alone.

The following examples illustrate factors beyond education that have an impact on gender equality. As you read them, think about which aspects if any reflect experiences in your country.

The example from Nigeria shows how the principles of a country's

education philosophy can be frustrated by ethnic, religious, geographical and political differences.

The Nigerian context

The Nigerian education philosophy is therefore based on:

- (1) the development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen;
- (2) the full integration of the individual into the community; and
- (3) the provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all.

The application of this philosophy is, however, complicated by ethno-religious and geopolitical differences in the country, which result in perceptions of marginalisation and mutual mistrust.

Thus, with the population of 117.8 million (as at 2001) (UNDP, 2003*) speaking over 400 languages and belonging to over 250 ethnic groups, coupled with a low Human Development Index (ranked 152 out of 175 according to UNDP, 2003), ethno-religious and regional tensions are high.

The struggle for economic and political dominance leads to high profile assassinations, religious intolerance and ethnic clashes at the slightest provocation. This situation, coupled with political influence of kinship, lack of transparency in government, etc., therefore, allows for corrupt practices and disregard for the rule of law, which consequently paves the way for marginalisation of the less-powerful groups and individuals.

The female sex in particular suffers discrimination in educational opportunities as well as in other spheres of life – economic, political and social.

* United Nations Development Programme (2003) *Human Development Report 2003: Millennium Development Goals: A compact among nations to end human poverty*, Oxford University Press, New York and Oxford.

[NIGERIA GENDER ANALYSIS STUDY]

The example from Samoa highlights the fact that traditional ways and the influence of the church are more integrated into the culture than school and education.

The Samoan context

Samoa is a traditional society seeking to integrate modern ideas and technologies. The village, district and national government political systems are based on *Fa'aSamoa*, and protocols and procedures in all areas of life continue to be governed by the *Fa'aSamoa*. *Fa'a Samoa* means the Samoan Way and is an all encompassing concept that dictates how Samoans are meant to behave. It refers to the obligations that Samoans owe their family, community and church and the individual's sense of Samoan identity.

Each individual within *Fa'aSamoa* can have many roles and responsibilities, which are determined by several factors including locality, holder of *matai* title, age and gender. All of these factors contribute to expectations and roles played by individuals and groups within families and villages.

Locality could arguably be the leading factor in determining roles and responsibilities of individuals and groups. That is, when a spouse is attending a gathering/ceremony at their partner's village/family they have a very specific role to perform that would be different if the gathering was occurring in their own family or village setting. The actual task will be determined by other factors such as age and gender; however, in this regard both male and female individuals have different roles and relationships in different environments that are not solely decided because of their gender.

The arrival in Samoa of the missionaries in the 1830s saw the introduction of a new set of hierarchy in village and family life, where the church minister was given – and in some places replaced – the high *matai* chief's importance and respect. This is of particular significance to the discussion on gender as the church ministers were (and still are today) men as women are not permitted to be appointed as ministers or pastors.

The church has profoundly influenced Samoan life, society and culture to such an extent that it became completely integrated; this is not the same for school. The school's place within village and family life is considered to be the place where *palagi* (European) ways are taught, and the school traditionally was not considered the place to teach children about Samoa or its culture. Today's educators have had to fight very hard to incorporate Samoan and things Samoan into the curriculum. Even with the introduction of things Samoan into the curriculum, the perception is still held by many that the school is a place of foreign knowledge and ideas.

In this regard the school and education have not been integrated into the culture as the church has. By extension the status of the teacher in the village is far inferior to the church pastor. Traditionally schooling and education used to be held in high regard by many Samoans. In recent years, however, there is some evidence that people's perceptions are changing and the high regard for education is becoming eroded.

[SAMOA GENDER ANALYSIS STUDY]

The final example shows the impact of the economy and crime and the relationship between them on education.

The Trinidad and Tobago context

Trinidad and Tobago is one of the most affluent societies in the Caribbean with a buoyant economy very much dependent on oil, gas and petrochemicals.

It is also one where crime has been on the rise for many years, largely as a result of the narcotics trade and gun running. Young men, in particular those who have not been successful at school, are implicated in murders, kidnappings, peddling and smuggling of drugs and ammunition, robberies and the like. There is widespread acknowledgement in the society that young men are not benefiting as they should from their education, especially in terms of social responsibility. For an ethnically charged society, that the young men are mainly of African descent is a sensitive issue.

Some people feel though that the problem extends to both males and females who have left school without or with minimal qualifications – that they will be exploited on the labour market, will not be able to maintain an adequate standard of living and will become a potentially destabilising force in the society. The 2007 Global Peace Index ranks Trinidad and Tobago 94th out of 121 countries.

[TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO GENDER ANALYSIS STUDY]

Whether or not these examples echo your experiences, they show the range of factors that can have an impact on gender equality in education. These factors can be grouped as:



For the next activity, have a go at a PEST analysis. Think about the main factors outside education that have an impact on gender equality in education in your country. If your country is large and you find it difficult to relate to that, do the exercise for your state, province or district. We have suggested some general headings so that you can give specific examples

for your country. (For example, under 'state of national economy' you could make notes about the current position and recent trends.)

ACTIVITY PEST analysis

Political

- Party politics and ideology
- Political will and public opinion
- Gender make up of power structures

Economic

- State of national economy
- Labour force requirements – industrial/ agricultural/ hi-tech
- Poverty and economic inequalities
- Aid delivery

Social

- Family
- Religion
- Social class
- Media messages
- Peer pressures
- Health
- Socio-historical (e.g., colonial past)

Technological

- Access to and availability of technologies
- Environmental and ecological factors
- Communications

Very likely you have mentioned many factors that you cannot change quickly. But being aware of the context and questioning the forces at play helps as a first step.

In thinking about factors that impact on gender equality in education, keep in mind other kinds of inequality – such as ethnicity, class, caste and disability. These cross-cut the issue of gender equality.

Always ask the questions: Which girls? Which boys? Don't take simple data at face value. For example: perhaps boys overall do well but boys of a particular ethnic or social group do worse than girls overall, or worse than girls in the same group, or the other way round. Or perhaps girls do better than boys in education, but this does not apply overall or in the wider society. Girls and boys are not uniform categories, and there are many different masculinities and femininities.

ACTIVITY Reflecting on PEST analysis

From your PEST activity, pick out the five factors you think have the most impact on gender equality in education in your context.

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Then reflect on the following questions and make notes.

Why have you chosen these five?

Why do these five continue to have an impact?

How do actions you take (or your school takes) support or oppose these factors?

ACTIVITY 2.1.3

You may find it useful to do this activity with a colleague or group of colleagues so that you can reflect on the questions together and pool your ideas.

Review

Look again at the objectives at the beginning of the topic and at your answers to the activities. Now that you have reached the end of this topic, you should be better able to:

- Relate education in your country to global goals expressed in the EFA and the MDGs
- Identify external factors that influence gender equality in education and the interplay between them.
- Highlight the most important factors in your context

Topic 2.2 The national education context

This topic focuses in from the big picture to examine how the action that schools can take is affected by the national education scene.

This topic will help you to:

- Identify education factors at national level that can help or hinder the action schools take
- Think about ways of influencing these factors

The next activity asks for your first thoughts about your own school in the national context, before you look at the rest of this topic. Again, if you consider it necessary and more relevant, you can do this exercise for the sub-national level or for both national and sub-national levels – just substitute the national in this unit with state/province whenever needed.

ACTIVITY National factors

From your own experience, note down five factors at the national education level which affect your school's effort to become more gender-responsive.

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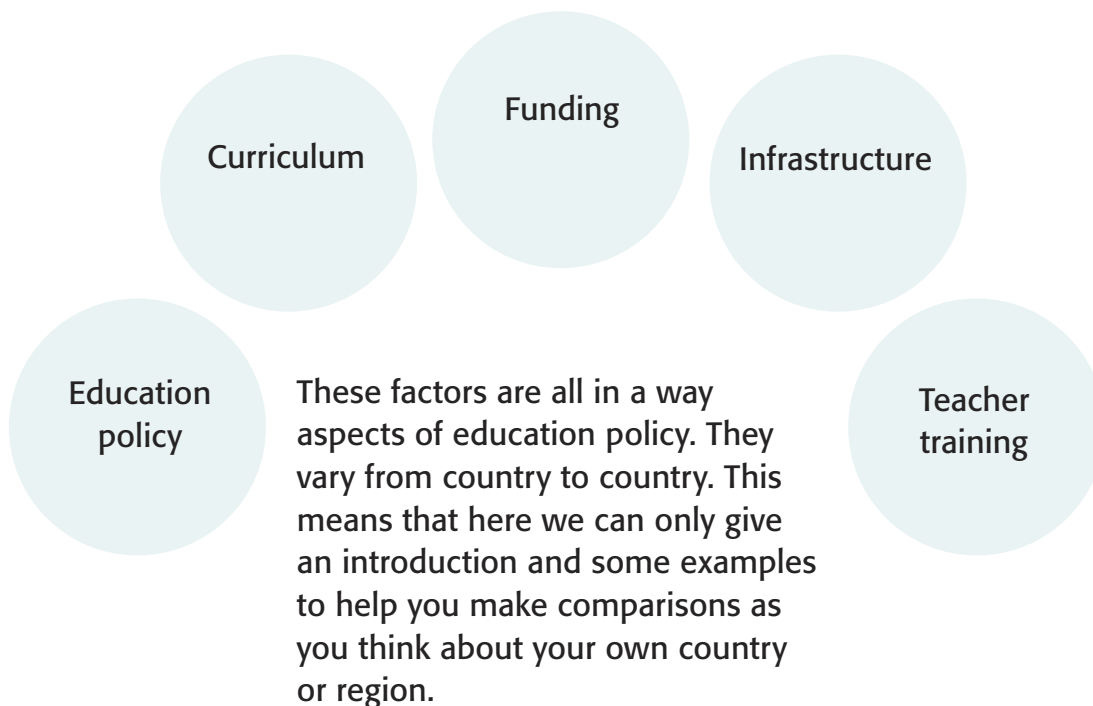
4

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ACTIVITY 2.2.1

For this topic we have identified the following five factors, though yours may be different. (If you have listed different factors, there is an activity later in this topic to help you think about them further.)

National education context



You may need to do some research or discuss with colleagues to find out more. For each factor we have given examples drawn from the research studies or action reports. As you read these, compare them with what you know about the situation in your country – what is the situation there? Who is responsible? Think how what the examples describe can help or hinder gender-responsiveness. If in the first instance you feel that a particular example is not relevant to your context, look closely to analyse the points of contrast and the lessons that can be learned.

For each factor there is an activity that follows the same pattern. It asks: 'Thinking about what your school can do to be more gender-responsive, which aspects of _____ [the factor] in your country help or hinder?' In other words, which offer opportunities to become more gender-responsive and which are likely to block initiatives?

Finally the topic looks at ways of influencing these factors at national level.

Education policy

What is education policy?

The term 'education policy' may suggest a document or plan of action that a country follows to operate its education system. But really policy is a collection of laws, statements and action plans. These cover all aspects of education as well as the underlying values about its purpose. There may not be a single clear statement of policy; rather, there may be a flood of initiatives, guidelines and reforms that together express the ideas and objectives.

So to define education policy in a country you may need to examine a number of documents and initiatives. A good starting point is probably the website of your ministry of education or equivalent, or an online search for 'education policy' plus 'country name'. Your school may have some of the key documents.

Note down basic information about policies and initiatives that you find in your search or that you already know about. What are the main policy concerns – for example, enrolment and participation, standards, survival rates, gender?

What does the policy say about gender?

What does the education policy have to say about gender, if anything?

Then question what it does say. Question any assumptions and stereotypes. For example:

- Are gender issues a key feature of stated policy, with a commitment to strive for equality?
- Are they scarcely mentioned at all? Aiming to be gender-neutral, policies may be gender-blind
- Are there assumptions about things like the role of women or the different potential of boys and girls?

Who makes policy?

In questioning education policy on gender, ask who makes policy and what influences it. For example, influences might include:

- International mandates and targets
- Broader national policies, e.g., economic
- Party politics or ideology
- Interest groups such as business, employers, religious groups
- Professional bodies, such as teacher unions

Is there scope for participation by local communities, parents or students themselves?

Education policy examples

Here are two examples of education policy. The first is an example of a simple statement of policy. The second gives more information about how a policy agenda can be put into action.

Trinidad and Tobago Education Policy 1993-2003

'As a national community, we are fully committed to the view that all our citizens, regardless of their gender, class, culture, ethnic origin, etc., have the ability to learn and should be provided with the opportunity to develop that potential to the fullest. We also recognise this as the only true guarantee of the kind of personal and social efficacy needed to sustain and improve our democratic way of life in Trinidad and Tobago.'

[TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO GENDER ANALYSIS STUDY]

Seychelles Ministry of Education's Mission Statement

Seychelles has opted for an inclusive educational agenda, which is clearly defined in its official policy statement 'Education for a Learning Society' published in 2000.

'The mission of the Ministry of Education is to build a coherent and comprehensive system of quality education and training, reflecting shared universal and national values, which will promote the integrated development of the person and empower him/her to participate fully in social and economic development.'

It is based on principles of equity, quality, accountability, education for empowerment, education for productivity, education for social cohesion and education for global participation.

Furthermore, the principle of equity is defined as:

- Equality of access to compulsory education
- Equitable sharing of resources
- Equal opportunity/ creating conditions for optimum achievement according to ability and career aspirations
- Ensuring that the context, content and medium of education are equally favourable to boys and girls
- Catering for special needs/ working towards greater inclusion of the learning disabled

The principle of gender equity is explicit and well defined. The promotion of equity and inclusion to help every student benefit from education is also one of the objectives in the National Development Plan for Education and Human Resources Development.

Until 2002, the Ministry of Education had an active Gender in Education Committee that acted as a watch dog and organised capacity-building workshops and sensitisation sessions for ministry and school staff on gender issues. It was instrumental in getting ministry sections to disaggregate statistics and mainstream gender into policies and

activities. Its current status is unclear.

The Ministry of Education has a Gender Action Plan (2002–2015), produced by the committee to respond to the Education for All Goal No. 5 for eliminating gender disparities and achieving gender equality in education by the year 2015.

[SEYCHELLES GENDER ANALYSIS STUDY]

ACTIVITY **Help or hinder? Education policy**

Thinking about what your school can do to be more gender-responsive, which aspects of education policy in your country help or hinder?

Help?

Hinder?

ACTIVITY 2.2.2

Curriculum

What's in the curriculum?

In its broad sense, the curriculum is all the experiences that students undergo at school. It includes:

- The official curriculum (the document)
- The enacted curriculum (what is taught)
- The hidden curriculum (the processes by which children learn attitudes and values in schools – this can reflect the school ethos, which we come to in Topic 3.1)

The word 'curriculum' may be used to mean different things in different contexts. For example, it can refer to:

- A syllabus/ a body of knowledge
- A set of objectives or goals
- * The process of teaching and learning
- A commitment to values, e.g., emancipation or transformation

The national curriculum is a curriculum prescribed at national level to ensure uniformity and standards across the system. For federal countries such as India, Nigeria and Pakistan there will be sub-national curricula.

Questions to ask about the curriculum

- What, if anything, does the national (or sub-national) curriculum say about gender issues?
- Is there an assumption that the curriculum is gender-neutral? Or is it really gender-blind?
- What is the unofficial or hidden curriculum? Are there assumptions, for example, that boys will study particular subjects and girls won't? Or that girls are destined for a domestic role and boys for a wage-earning role?
- Do issues of reproductive health (e.g., concerns about contraception, pregnancy, sexual abuse and harassment, HIV and AIDS) figure in the curriculum?
- Is gender integrated into subjects like social studies, life skills and religious studies?

What about the examination and qualifications framework?

As with the curriculum, ask whether there are gender-related impacts. For example, does the method of examination favour boys or girls more? Does the framework reflect the curriculum's approach to gender equality?

Who sets the curriculum?

How is the national curriculum developed and who decides – politicians, civil servants, professional bodies, unions, researchers and academics, advisory bodies, the examination and assessment

bodies? Is there scope for input from NGOs, interest groups and parent and student representatives? What accountability is there? What participatory structures exist?

Curriculum examples

The following example from India shows how there may be a gap between a national curriculum and implementation at state level. The Malaysia example describes a four-tier structure for implementing curriculum.

India

At national level, the National Curriculum Framework, 2005 flags the importance of including and retaining all children in school and enabling all children to experience dignity and confidence to learn. It further draws attention to the importance of school ethos and culture, classroom practices of teachers, learning sites outside the school and learning resources, all issues that are extremely important in relation to reducing gender inequalities in education.

The renewed emphasis on universalising secondary education necessitates that gender equality concerns are brought centre stage, to enable girls to move beyond the elementary stages and access secondary schooling.

However, at state level in Rajasthan, while there have been some efforts towards curriculum reform, the approach adopted has been 'add women and stir'. The curriculum continues to reinforce traditional gender roles and does not offer learners the space to imagine a different future or set of gender relations. The State Government has also resisted the implementation of the National Curriculum Framework, 2005, giving little space for reform.

[INDIA GENDER ANALYSIS STUDY]

Malaysia

The primary and secondary schools follow the National Integrated Curriculum, which is set by the Ministry of Education. The curricula for post-secondary and higher level education are varied and depend on the educational institutions offering the courses. Colleges and universities are now under a separate ministry, i.e., the Ministry of Higher Education. Private schools do exist and are of two different types – those that teach the National Integrated Curriculum and those that follow the international syllabi according to their country affiliation.

The Ministry of Education develops and monitors the progress of the national school system and curriculum. The guiding policy, as embodied in the National Education Policy, for the integrated curriculum is as follows:

'To prepare an education programme inclusive of the curriculum and co-curricular activities which encompasses all discipline of knowledge, skills, norms, values, cultural elements and beliefs to assist in the full

and holistic development of individuals physically, spiritually, mentally and emotionally as well as to inculcate and enhance desirable moral values and to impart knowledge.’ (National Education Policy, p. 4).

The Malaysian Government has put in place a number of enabling factors to assist in the development of the education sector. Some of them are as follows (MDG Malaysia Report, 2005, p. 75):

‘The Malaysian education system, guided by the Educational Development Plan (EDP) 2001–2010, follows a set of processes and procedures. As stated in the plan, there are four tiers in the education management system, and they are as follows (EDP:7-2):

1. Ministry of Education. The Educational Administration System is centralised under the responsibility of the Federal Government. This means all activities concerning policy formulation development planning, curriculum development, public examination administration, and financing are managed and coordinated at the Ministry level. It monitors educational programmes, with support from the state and district education departments.
2. State Education Department. This level is in charge of school management, monitoring and inspection of educational policies and implementation of programmes.
3. District Education Department. This level assists the state in its tasks.
4. School Management. The head/principal manages the finance, students’ academic, and co-curricular activities of their schools. There are two senior assistants to assist the head/principal. The hierarchy in the schools follows a generic management structure

The management of the curriculum and assessment is carried out by several departments/divisions, such as, the Curriculum Development Centre, Technical Education Department, Malaysian Examination Syndicate, Malaysian Examination Council, Special Education Department, and the Islamic and Moral Education Department (EDP:7-3).’

[MALAYSIA GENDER ANALYSIS STUDY]

ACTIVITY Help or hinder? Curriculum

Thinking about what your school can do to be more gender-responsive, which aspects of the curriculum in your country help or hinder?
Help?

Hinder?

Funding

How is schooling funded?

How much money is available for education and how is it allocated? This is an important aspect of education policy. What proportion of national expenditure is spent on education? How is it divided between primary, secondary and tertiary levels? The way funding is allocated may be considered gender-neutral, but it may have different impacts on boys and girls. Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) will reveal this.

Is funding gender-responsive?

Some countries use a GRB approach. This aims to promote gender equality in education through decisions on educational funding. It covers such activities as:

- Analysing how far current expenditure meets different priorities of boys and girls and how far they benefit
- Evaluating the policies underlying budget allocations to identify their likely impact – will they reduce, increase or leave unchanged gender inequalities?
- Breaking down expenditure into gender-relevant categories

Who provides the funding?

National, regional and local government may all be involved in funding decisions, as may donors or civil society organisations. There may be private schools or schools supported by religious organisations. Local organisations and schools themselves can undertake GRB initiatives.

There may be special funding for gender-related incentive schemes or programmes for which schools can apply. It is important to do research or make inquiries to find out if such funding is available.

Funding example

The South Australian GRB used a simple framework, which has since been adopted and adapted in many other countries.

The South Australian GRB framework distinguishes between three categories of expenditure as follows:

Gender-targeted expenditures, i.e., expenditure directed specifically at improving gender equality. In terms of education, examples would be special scholarships for girls, school stipends paid for girls, quotas or affirmative actions.

Staff-related employment-equity expenditures, i.e., expenditures that promote employment equity among public servants. In education,

they might include expenditures on training for women teachers to help them to progress further in their careers. An analysis of levels of pay of men and women teachers, e.g., differences between primary and secondary and different subjects such as science and maths, might reveal unforeseen gender impacts.

General/ mainstream expenditures analysed for their gender impact, e.g., expenditure on post-compulsory education, sectors that commonly have a high proportion of male students and the provision of early childhood education, because it particularly benefits women and older girls by reducing their burden of child care. General increases in educational spending, particularly when targeted at primary or secondary rather than tertiary education, will usually favour girls. 'The introduction of universal and free primary education into a country is probably the most dramatically obvious application of mainstream education that is likely to contribute to gender equity' (p. 86). In addition there is also scope for gender-related targeting within mainstream expenditure.

Adapted from: Aikman, S and Unterhalter, E (eds) (2007) *Practising Gender Equality in Education*, Oxfam, Oxford.

ACTIVITY **Help or hinder? Funding**

Thinking about what your school can do to be more gender-responsive, which aspects of funding in your country help or hinder?

Help?

Hinder?

ACTIVITY 2.2.4

Infrastructure

What is infrastructure?

Infrastructure means the basic stock of schools and equipment. It also includes the systems to support them such as transport and roads. The kind of questions here are:

- Are there enough schools? Are they the right kind of schools (for example, the appropriate number of primary and secondary schools)? If they are single sex schools, is there equal provision?
- Are they in the right places – available to scattered populations, for example, free of regional bias, accessible?
- Are there boarding schools or residential hostels if needed?
- Are the schools themselves suitable – secure and with basic facilities such as water and toilets as well as privacy?
- Is there supporting infrastructure – are there roads and bridges so that pupils can get to schools? Is there adequate and affordable transport? Does transport cater for mobility/ transport issues for girls?

Who plans and provides?

Who is responsible for planning and providing the infrastructure – and at what level? Is it the national or regional government? Local government? Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or religious bodies? How is supporting infrastructure coordinated with the provision of the schools themselves?

Infrastructure example

This example from India covers both funding and infrastructure.

Rajasthan Government Initiatives to Promote Girls' Education

Several initiatives have been put in place by the State Government to encourage the enrolment of girls in secondary education. These include:

Girls enrolled in Class I to XII are exempted from paying school fees.

All girls studying in government schools are provided free textbooks from Class I to XII.

To encourage enrolment of rural girls at the secondary and higher secondary stages, girls' hostels have been established in six divisional headquarters catering to 50 girls. In addition, 25 girls' hostels have also been established at the district headquarters.

A Balika Shiksha foundation was established in 1994–95 to encourage education among girls. The foundation provides financial assistance to meritorious girls coming from poor families for higher studies. It also addresses the gaps related to infrastructure and basic needs in girls' secondary schools.

Since 1997–98, the Rajasthan Board of Secondary Education has been conferring the Gargi Puruskar on all girls who score more than 75 per cent aggregate marks in Class X. A scholarship of Rs.1000/- per annum is provided to pursue education in Class XI and XII. In the year 2006–07, the award was given to 12, 902 girls incurring an expenditure of Rs. 129.02 lakhs.

Several scholarships have also been provided for girls belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and nomadic families.

Girls studying in Classes IX to XII have also been provided with free transportation facilities.

The Rajasthan State Transport Corporation has been directed to issue free bus passes to girls studying in secondary and senior higher secondary schools to ensure easy access to schools.

An insurance scheme has also been introduced for girls enrolled in the secondary and senior secondary schools.

In addition, the Five Point Programme for Women recently announced by the Chief Minister of Rajasthan focuses on ensuring 100 per cent enrolment of girls in schools.

[INDIA GENDER ANALYSIS STUDY]

ACTIVITY **Help or hinder? Infrastructure**

Thinking about what your school can do to be more gender-responsive, which aspects of education policy in your country help or hinder?
Help?

Hinder?

ACTIVITY 2.2.5

Teacher training

Does initial teacher training cover gender issues?

Teacher training should cover gender issues, but this is not always the case. Are gender issues part of initial teacher training in your country?

Think about your own teacher training, or the recent training of colleagues, and whether it covered gender issues. For example, was there just a general commitment to equality or were practical approaches taught? Were there one-off sessions on the topic or was it a theme that ran through the whole programme?

In your experience, did your teacher training help you question your own attitudes?

What about continuing professional development?

What scope is there for continuing professional development, either to fill gaps in initial teacher training or to follow it up as teachers gain further experience?

Who provides teacher training?

The same questions apply. Who provides teacher training? How is it funded? How is the teacher training curriculum drawn up? What scope is there for input by teachers themselves, parents or NGOs?

Teacher training examples

The two examples highlight the need for initial teacher training to cover gender issues.

Nigeria

Very few teacher-training institutions (if any) include gender studies (or the implications of sex differences in schools) in their basic (or in-service) programmes. As producers of teachers, teacher education institutions are the key to perpetuating, as well as to redressing, gender discrimination in the education system, especially in developing countries. Since teachers serve as models to students, particularly at the primary and secondary levels, the gender-prejudiced nature of their training allows for effective inculcation of existing inequities from one generation of pupils to another.

[NIGERIA GENDER ANALYSIS STUDY]

India

There are no subject-related training programmes organised for secondary school teachers. Some teachers had attended training programmes related to computers, life skills education, HIV/AIDS or

Scouts /Guides. None of the teachers had received any gender training. They felt that introducing gender issues in pre-service and in-service training would only have a partial impact. One of the women teachers who had participated in a training programme on life skills education stated that the male participants during the training were passing comments and laughing. The teachers felt that attitudes needed to undergo a change at the household level.

[INDIA GENDER ANALYSIS STUDY]

ACTIVITY **Help or hinder? Teacher training**

Thinking about what your school can do to be more gender-responsive, which aspects of teacher training in your country help or hinder?
Help?

Hinder?

ACTIVITY 2.2.6

In this topic we have looked at education policy, curriculum, funding, infrastructure, and teacher training as factors at the national level that may affect your school's effort to become more gender-responsive.

If you have thought of other factors as well, ask yourself the same questions about them. Then carry out the same activity.

- What is the situation in your country?
- Who is responsible?

ACTIVITY Other factors Help or hinder?

The factor is:

Thinking about what your school can do to be more gender-responsive, which aspects of the factor(s) you have identified in your country help or hinder?

Help?

Hinder?

ACTIVITY 2.2.7

Influencing the situation

For each factor that helps to determine the national education context, you have thought about:

- What the situation is in your country
- Who is responsible
- How the situation helps or hinders action to become more gender-responsive in your school

Look back at your activities from this topic. You should now have a list of opportunities for ('help') and barriers to ('hinder') gender equality.

The final question is how to influence policy. These aspects of policy are not set in stone. They result from interactions between policy and practice. Ideally these interactions happen at all times, with full

participation. But at other times this may only happen through conflict and contestation.

The important thing is to recognise opportunities. The final activity for this topic is to identify entry points for influencing policy.

ACTIVITY **Influencing policy**

Look back at your activities for this topic. For each of the factors note at least one action you or your school could take to influence policy.

Education policy

Funding

Infrastructure

Curriculum

Teacher training

Other

ACTIVITY 2.2.8

Examples might be:

- Find allies for lobbying at national level
- Work with professional bodies on curriculum development
- Find out more about gender-related incentive schemes or funding to apply for

Review

Again, here's a chance to review what you have covered. Look back at the objectives at the beginning of the topic and at your answers to the activities. You should now be better able to:

- Analyse education factors at national level that can help or hinder the action schools can take
- Suggest ways of influencing policy